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Q: How does the Senate's passage of the Pressler Amendment affect Administration policy on the grains embargo?

A: On September 26 the Senate voted by a narrow margin to amend the State/Commerce/Justice and the Judiciary appropriations bill to prohibit the use of funds for implementing or enforcing the partial grains embargo. Since the same amendment was overwhelmingly defeated in the House in July, its fate will be decided by a House/Senate conference committee. We understand that a conference committee meeting on the appropriation bill is unlikely to take place before Congress recesses for the election. We are hopeful that the Pressler Amendment will be rejected by the Conference Committee when Congress returns.

In any event Administration policy on the grains embargo remains unchanged. US grains sales for the USSR will be limited to 8 million tons in the final year of the US-USSR Grains Agreement beginning October 1. We continue to believe that the embargo is important in making clear to the Soviet Union that we cannot trade on a "business as usual" basis while Soviet aggression against Afghanistan continues.

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